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ABSTRACT

This book addresses the need for change in the ways businesses are conducted in order to respond to increased global competition and describes the forms change has taken in many businesses. The first part of the book introduces the need for change and describes some change strategies that businesses have adopted. Part II considers the alternative production systems that have emerged in other countries in the 1970s and early 1980s, highlighting how some of these systems have inspired change in production systems in the United States. In Part III, evidence of workplace innovation in U.S. companies is summarized through an examination of case studies; the evidence generally shows that the majority of large firms have adopted some innovative practices although they still affect a minority of employees. Part IV discusses solutions at the level of the organization and at the level of public policy, for changing U.S. production processes into high performance systems to increase competitiveness. Appendixes provide the following: (1) the incidence of organizational change among U.S. firms; and (2) a summary of case studies from 1970-1992. The book also contains a glossary of 20 terms, a list of 297 references, and an index. (KC)

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